

## CHAPTER 717

### INJURY TO LIVESTOCK

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#### 717.1 Definitions.

As used in [this chapter](#), unless the context otherwise requires:

1. “*Law enforcement officer*” means a regularly employed member of a police force of a city or county, including a sheriff, who is responsible for the prevention and detection of crime and the enforcement of the criminal laws of this state.
2. “*Livestock*” means an animal belonging to the bovine, caprine, equine, ovine, or porcine species, ostriches, rheas, emus; farm deer as defined in [section 170.1](#); or poultry.
3. “*Livestock care provider*” means a person designated by a local authority to provide care to livestock which is rescued by the local authority pursuant to [section 717.2A](#).
4. “*Local authority*” means a city as defined in [section 362.2](#) or a county as provided in [chapter 331](#).
5. “*Maintenance*” means to provide on-site or off-site care to neglected livestock.
6. “*Sustenance*” means food, water, or a nutritional formulation customarily used in the production of livestock.

[C51, §2678; R60, §4318; C73, §3977; C97, §4818; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, **§13132**; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §717.1]

94 Acts, ch 1103, §7; 95 Acts, ch 43, §14; 95 Acts, ch 134, § 6; 2003 Acts, ch 149, §21, 23

Referred to in [§15E.202](#), [159.5](#), [163.3A](#), [172E.1](#), [484B.1](#), [501A.102](#), [562.1A](#), [717B.1](#), [717D.1](#)

#### 717.1A Livestock abuse.

A person is guilty of livestock abuse if the person intentionally injures or destroys livestock owned by another person, in any manner, including, but not limited to, intentionally doing any of the following: administering drugs or poisons to the livestock, or disabling the livestock by using a firearm or trap. A person guilty of livestock abuse commits an aggravated misdemeanor. [This section](#) shall not apply to any of the following:

1. A person acting with the consent of the person owning the livestock, unless the action constitutes livestock neglect as provided in [section 717.2](#).
2. A person acting to carry out an order issued by a court.
3. A licensed veterinarian practicing veterinary medicine as provided in [chapter 169](#).
4. A person acting in order to carry out another provision of law which allows the conduct.
5. A person reasonably acting to protect the person’s property from damage caused by estray livestock.
6. A person reasonably acting to protect a person from injury or death caused by estray livestock.
7. A research facility, as defined in [section 162.2](#), provided that the research facility performs functions within the scope of accepted practices and disciplines associated with the research facility.

94 Acts, ch 1103, §8; 2008 Acts, ch 1058, §17

#### 717.2 Livestock neglect.

1. A person who impounds or confines livestock, in any place, and does any of the following commits the offense of livestock neglect:
  - a. Fails to provide livestock with care consistent with customary animal husbandry practices.
  - b. Deprives livestock of necessary sustenance.

c. Injures or destroys livestock by any means which causes pain or suffering in a manner inconsistent with customary animal husbandry practices.

2. A person who commits the offense of livestock neglect is guilty of a simple misdemeanor. A person who intentionally commits the offense of livestock neglect which results in serious injury to or the death of livestock is guilty of a serious misdemeanor. However, a person shall not be guilty of more than one offense of livestock neglect punishable as a serious misdemeanor, when care or sustenance is not provided to multiple head of livestock during any period of uninterrupted neglect.

3. [This section](#) does not apply to a research facility, as defined in [section 162.2](#), provided that the research facility performs functions within the scope of accepted practices and disciplines associated with the research facility.

[C51, §2716; R60, §4358; C73, §4031, 4034; C97, §4969, 4972; S13, §4969; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**13133, 13134**; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §717.2, 717.3; C79, 81, §717.2] 86 Acts, ch 1121, §3; 87 Acts, ch 179, §1; 94 Acts, ch 1103, §9; 2008 Acts, ch 1058, §18  
Referred to in [§717.1A, 717.2A, 717.5](#)

### **717.2A Rescue of neglected livestock.**

1. a. A law enforcement officer may rescue livestock neglected as provided in [section 717.2](#) on public or private property, as provided in [this subsection](#).

b. The officer may enter onto property of a person to rescue neglected livestock if the officer obtains a search warrant issued by a court, or enters onto the premises in a manner consistent with the laws of this state and the United States, including Article I, section 8, of the Constitution of the State of Iowa, or the fourth amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

c. Livestock neglected as provided in [section 717.2](#) may be rescued pursuant to the following conditions:

(1) If a criminal proceeding has not been commenced against the person owning or caring for the livestock, the following shall apply:

(a) The local authority shall receive a written statement from a veterinarian licensed pursuant to [chapter 169](#), providing that, in the veterinarian's opinion, the livestock is neglected.

(b) The local authority shall provide written notice to the person owning or caring for the livestock by delivery at the last known address of the person. The local authority shall deliver the notice by certified mail or make a good faith effort to personally deliver the notice to the person owning or caring for the livestock. The notice shall include all of the following:

(i) The name and address of the local authority.

(ii) A description of the livestock subject to rescue.

(iii) A statement informing the person that the livestock may be rescued pursuant to [this chapter](#) within one day following receipt of the notice by the person. The statement must specify a date, time, and a location for delivery of the response designated by the local authority, as provided in [this subsection](#).

(iv) A statement informing the person that in order to avoid rescue of the livestock, the person must respond to the notice in writing signed by a veterinarian licensed pursuant to [chapter 169](#). The veterinarian must state that, in the opinion of the veterinarian, the livestock is not neglected, or the person is taking immediate measures required to rehabilitate the livestock.

(c) A law enforcement officer may rescue the livestock, if the local authority fails to receive a written response by the person owning or caring for the livestock by the end of normal office hours of the next day that the local authority is available to receive the response at the offices of the local authority. However, if the local authority is not available to receive a response at its offices, the local authority may designate another location in the county to receive the response.

(2) If a criminal proceeding has been commenced against the person owning or caring for the livestock, the local authority must receive a written statement from a veterinarian licensed pursuant to [chapter 169](#), providing that, in the veterinarian's opinion, the livestock is neglected.

(3) Regardless of whether a criminal proceeding has commenced, the local authority may immediately rescue livestock without providing notice as otherwise required in [this section](#). However, the local authority must receive a written statement from a veterinarian licensed pursuant to [chapter 169](#), providing that in the veterinarian's opinion, the livestock is neglected. In order to rescue the livestock, the local authority must determine that the livestock has been abandoned or that no person is able or willing to care for the livestock, and the livestock is permanently distressed by disease or injury to a degree that would result in severe and prolonged suffering.

2. If livestock is rescued pursuant to [this section](#), the local authority shall post a notice in a conspicuous place at the location where the livestock was rescued. The notice shall state that the livestock has been rescued by the local authority pursuant to [this section](#). The local authority shall provide for the maintenance of the neglected livestock. The local authority may contract with a livestock care provider for the maintenance of the neglected livestock. The local authority shall pay the livestock care provider for the livestock's maintenance regardless of proceeds received from the sale of the livestock or any reimbursement ordered by a court, pursuant to [section 717.5](#).

3. The livestock shall be subject to disposition pursuant to [section 717.5](#).

94 Acts, ch 1103, §10

Referred to in [§670.4](#), [717.1](#), [717.5](#)

**717.3 and 717.4** Repealed by 94 Acts, ch 1103, §23.

#### **717.5 Disposition of neglected livestock.**

1. A court shall order the disposition of livestock neglected as provided in [section 717.2](#) after a hearing upon application or petition to the court by a local authority or a person owning or caring for the livestock. The matter shall be heard within ten days from the filing of a petition by the local authority or the person. The court may continue the hearing for up to forty days upon petition by the person. However, the person shall post a bond or other security with the local authority in an amount determined by the court, which shall not be more than the amount sufficient to provide for the maintenance of the livestock for forty days. The court may grant a subsequent continuance by the person for the same length of time if the person submits a new bond or security. However, the court shall order the immediate disposition of the livestock if the livestock is permanently distressed by disease or injury to a degree that would result in severe or prolonged suffering.

2. The hearing to determine if livestock has been neglected for purposes of disposition shall be a civil proceeding. If the case is related to a criminal proceeding, the disposition shall not be part of that proceeding and shall not be considered a criminal penalty imposed on a person found in violation of [section 717.2](#).

3. A court may order a person owning the neglected livestock to pay an amount which shall not be more than the expenses incurred in maintaining the neglected livestock rescued pursuant to [section 717.2A](#), and reasonable attorney fees and expenses related to the investigation of the case. The remaining amount of a bond or other security posted pursuant to [this section](#) shall be used to reimburse the local authority. If more than one person has a divisible interest in the livestock, the amount required to be paid shall be prorated based on the percentage of interest in the livestock owned by each person. The moneys shall be paid to the local authority incurring the expense. The amount shall be subtracted from proceeds owed to the owner or owners of the livestock, which are received from the sale of the livestock ordered by the court. Moneys owed to the local authority from the sale of neglected livestock shall be paid to the local authority before satisfying indebtedness secured by any security interest in or lien on the livestock. If an owner of the livestock is a landowner, the local authority may submit an amount to the clerk of the county board of supervisors who shall report the amount to the county treasurer. The amount shall equal the balance remaining after the sale of the livestock. If the livestock owner owns a percentage of the livestock, the reported amount shall equal the remaining balance owed by all landowners who own a percentage of the livestock. That amount shall be prorated among the landowners based on the percentage of interest in the livestock attributable to

each landowner. The amount shall be placed upon the tax books, and collected with interest and penalties after due, in the same manner as other unpaid property taxes. The county shall reimburse a city within thirty days from the collection of the property taxes.

4. Neglected livestock ordered to be destroyed shall be destroyed only by a humane method, including euthanasia as defined in [section 162.2](#).

86 Acts, ch 1121, §4; 94 Acts, ch 1103, §11

Referred to in [§602.6405](#), [717.2A](#), [717D.5](#)

**717.6** Repealed by 94 Acts, ch 1103, § 23. See § 717B.9.